

CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY
INFORMATION REPORT

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Czechoslovakia

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"Ohara 1" Factory for Woolen Yard
Goods in Asi/Other Ohara Plants

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THIS IS UNEVALUATED INFORMATION

1. The Ohara I factory and a subsidiary, Ohara II (both formerly owned by Geissel and Son) are located in Asi. Other subsidiary plants of Ohara are located in Hranice, Stribe, Leskov, Chraštava and Svitova. The Asi plants manufacture ladies' woolen yard goods for home use and export; all Ohara plants produce for export and for the "Darex" firm (Czech gift shipping company).
2. There were [redacted] some 800 employees in the entire Ohara enterprise; these included 480 specialists, 80 clerks and the remainder auxiliary workers. Women made up 60% of the total personnel. Yard goods for export were produced only by specialists (Ohara II had only 30 of this type worker). Auxiliary workers manufactured goods for home consumption where quality was not essential.
[redacted]
processing of goods.
3. Ohara factory wages were based on piece work. When a weaver failed to fulfill his quota, a deduction was made from his salary so that the financial plan of the factory could be kept in balance. After 14 days an employee might have 1,500 crowns deposited to his account and yet at the end of the month he might owe 500 crowns because his quota was only 45% fulfilled. The salary of a factory director was 14 thousand crowns per month; the administrative director received 12 thousand crowns and the technical director 10 thousand crowns per month.
4. The Ohara I factory received coal from Ostrava, water from Asi and electricity from the power line in Selb. Seventy-five percent of the raw wool material used by Ohara came from the Soviet Union; it was of poor quality and easily was torn during weaving.
5. The Ohara I factory in 1952 was under an order to donate two and one-half million crowns to further construction activities at Kunice. The amount was transmitted via the Czechoslovakian state bank.
6. Five hundred persons were to be evacuated from Asi in May 1952. It was rumored that by the end of 1952 the entire community was to be evacuated to the interior. It was also rumored that when the evacuation was completed, Asi would be ceded to Eastern Germany, and as compensation, Czechoslovakia was to receive the territory of Liberec. Persons who were said to be listed for earliest evacuation were those with political demerits against them. Persons whose relatives had escaped abroad and who were known to be politically unreliable were scheduled to follow. Finally, the remainder of the population was to be evacuated.

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- 2 -

7. Procedures for evacuation were as follows. A list of politically unreliable persons was submitted to the STB by the local national committee. Persons whose names appeared on the list were then summoned and told that, according to the law regarding the protection of the state border, they must leave the area within a month. Each was given some opportunity to find suitable inland quarters; after ten days the individual must answer another summons and show proof he had a place to live. The proof was then checked by the local national committee, which arranged for transportation. For this last purpose trucks were used for distances up to 100 km; beyond this limit the railroads were used.
8. In March 1952 a military delegation composed of 20 Soviet and Czech officers arrived at the Ohara I factory; six of these men were Soviet naval officers. The delegation went through a detailed three-hour inspection of the factory. General opinion held the visit to have something to do with transferring the entire factory elsewhere.
9. About 50% of the Ohara I personnel was very young and easily tired; they accomplished little work. None of them were members of the Communist Party; Communist propaganda was weak and the workers demonstrated little interest in politics. When Communist meetings were held, attendance was sparse and even Party members found excuses for not attending. The population of Asi was extremely dissatisfied with the regime, would have liked to escape to Germany but the barbed wire and felled trees along the border prevented it.
10. The message center for all Ohara factories was located in the Ohara I plant in Asi. All mail was received there, sorted and delivered to the other plants and departments. Mail for the Ministry of Light Industry in Prague was collected from all departments, placed in one envelope and dispatched as a unit, to save postage. Secret reports from the factories to the Ministry of Light Industry in Prague were dispatched in a yellow envelope with a red border.
11. The factories have their own guard and militia; the guard consists of eight men armed with pistols, while the militia had 40 members, of whom 15 were women. The militia trained twice weekly with rifles and light machine guns. ~~Ammunition was stored within a factory area, as were the weapons.~~ The militia was on guard day and night.
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